



**Church of England
Primary School**

Attendance Policy

Review Frequency	Three years	Review date	June 2022
Governor Approval (date)	28 June 2019	Website	YES
Chair	A. Weatherup	Headteacher	D. Buddle

Aims

This policy aims to: Support children and their families to have the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality; ensure that all children have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer; and make parents and carers aware of their legal responsibilities.

Attendance Targets

Percentage	Judgement on Attendance	Impact
98% - 100%	Good attendance	<p>Your child is attending school well and accessing more learning than average. We find that children who achieve this level of attendance tend to do so for the rest of their school lives, as it becomes habit and they learn to expect to be in every day. Your child is getting the most out of school and is being given the best chance to succeed and make progress.</p> <p>We want children to achieve this level of attendance as gives them best opportunity to succeed and to form a strong work ethic and understanding that we go to school/work each day.</p>
96% – 97%	Average attendance	<p>Your child is attending school at an average level and getting as much time in school, on average, as the rest of children in the UK. Children at the bottom end of this band are at risk missing up to, an average, of 1.2 hours of school a week.</p> <p>We are ambitious that all our children get the most out of school and Shine Brightly by aiming to be more than just average!</p>
91% – 95%	Attendance is below average and causing concern	<p>Your child is not attending school as much as other children and is, as such, not accessing as much learning or the same opportunities as their peers. Attendance is causing concern at this point and, at the bottom end of this band, your child is missing up to an average of a half day of school each week. Children with attendance in this band are at risk of forming poor attendance habits and can struggle to get it to improve without support. Families and school will work together at this point to agree a plan to improve attendance.</p> <p>School and family will need to work together to plan for improvement.</p>
90% and below	Attendance is classed as Persistent Absenteeism	<p>Your child is missing, on average, at least a half day of school each week. They are being significantly disadvantaged and the school and family will need to work together with the EWO (education welfare officer) to improve this urgently. The family is at risk of fine or prosecution if attendance doesn't improve.</p> <p>School, family and the education welfare officer will need to work together to ensure immediate improvement. The family is at risk of fines and prosecution.</p>

Responsibilities

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- Ensure that they contact the school if their child is unable to attend school every day and follow the instructions on the answer machine carefully to ensure school has the correct information to authorise the absence
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details
- Collect their children on time at the end of the school day
- Where asked provide medical evidence which can include: appointment cards, print out of consultation with GP or prescriptions are all free and acceptable evidence

We expect that school will:

- Provide a safe learning environment
- Reward and celebrate good attendance
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality
- Monitor each individual child's attendance and punctuality regularly
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality
- Meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality
- Communicate with families and send letters to all those with parental responsibility for a child to raise awareness of and follow up on concerns about attendance (see Appendix A). Where possible we try to personalise these letters in order to recognise individual situations
- Engage with parents if lateness is causing a concern
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to EWO
- Work with the EWO to take legal action against families not meeting their legal obligations in relation to attendance of school when appropriate

Registration

- **The school day starts at 8:55am** when the whistle is blown on the playground
- Registers open at 9:00am for morning registration
- **Children arriving at school after 9:00am will need to report to the school office** and will be recorded as **late**
- The registers close at 9:30am. **Children arriving after 9:30am** will be recorded as **absent**

Child leaving school during the school day

- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside school time
- Children must be signed out on leaving school and be signed back in on their return
- Where a child is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the office before the child is allowed to leave the site
- If a child leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police*
- If parents regularly take their children out of school following afternoon registration we will communicate with the family; the school may consider this an absence which affects attendance if happening on a regular basis

Leave of absence

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations, leave during term time will NOT be authorised.

- In **exceptional and extraordinary circumstances** leave of absence may be granted
- Where leave of absence is due to exceptional circumstance is required, an application should be made using a leave of absence form (available from the school office), no less than 2 weeks prior to the requested date where circumstances allow. Consideration will then be given to the child's previous attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Welfare will be notified

Penalty Notices

The Headteacher has the authority to refer parents to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave (where attendance levels are low and already causing significant concern). If a family meets the criteria for unauthorised leave (for example, a term time holiday) the Headteacher is obligated to refer parents to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice. These penalty notices will be issued by the Local Authority. The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 per parent/carer per child when paid within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance.

Appendix A

Attendance Letter 1

Dear XXXX

Re: Name of pupil Dob:

The school monitors attendance closely with a view to support families with achieving good levels of attendance as soon as possible where we can. As such, we take the time to look at attendance every couple of weeks and to send these letters out to our families when their child's attendance hits particular thresholds. We understand that this can sometimes seem onerous or imposing and that oftentimes there are reasonable or exceptional circumstances as to why attendance is below expectations in a given year. As such, we appreciate your understanding and support with this approach; attendance can have a significant impact on children's progress and attitudes to school and, later in life, work and this approach helps us to ensure support, when needed, is put in place quickly to support families with getting the most out of school for their children.

With that said, I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to «percentage_attendance»% and as a result we are becoming concerned that «forename» is missing a significant part of learning. I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

I will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance so if there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which are having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly, please do not hesitate to contact me or your class teacher to share as we may be able to support in some way. If the absences are due to medical reasons which you feel may continue to impact on attendance, it would be advisable that you provide evidence of medical appointments (e.g. appointment cards, prescriptions, a print out of GPs consultation notes etc.) to support us in authorising absences (we may even be able to put a health plan together if needed to support.) Again, do not hesitate to contact me or your class teacher if you have concerns or questions.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. D. Buddle

Headteacher

Enc. Record of attendance & school attendance leaflet

Attendance Letter 3

Dear xxx

Re: Child Name: xxx DOB: xxx

Your child has been absent from school for xxx sessions this school year/over the previous xxx weeks. I enclose a record of XXX's attendance.

We make it a priority to work with families to support them to avoid these low levels of attendance as they can have a significant impact on children's progress and attitudes to school and work. Moreover, as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually and we aim to raise awareness of this and support families to meet this obligation as promptly as we can.

Unfortunately, on this occasion, attendance is still low and will be having an impact on your child's education. Please note that, that the Persistent Absence (PA) threshold is 10%. This means that if a child/young person has an overall attendance of 90% or less over a given period, they will be classified as a persistent absentee pupil and we may be required to refer the attendance issue to the Cambridgeshire County Council for possible legal intervention.

I am therefore writing to inform you that if attendance doesn't improve during the next xxxxx weeks, the case may be referred to Cambridgeshire County Council for possible legal intervention. As always, we are here to offer support with this and will be happy to meet to discuss anything further we can do to help improve attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. D. Buddle

Headteacher

Enc. Record of attendance & attendance leaflet

Appendix B - Record of Attendance Meeting

Title/Reason	Attendance/Punctuality	Date:	Time:
Present/Involved:	Name:	Year Group:	Dob:
Attendance	Unauthorised Absence	Authorised Absence	
Total Lates:	Unexplained abs:		

Record	
ANY PROBLEMS AT HOME/SCHOOL I.E. BULLYING ETC THAT MAY AFFECT ATTENDANCE/NEED SUPPORT?	
Medical:	
School:	
Bullying:	
Community:	
Home:	
Transport:	
Planned Holidays	

Outcomes/Action (include attendance target)	
EHA Offered? YES/NO (Early Help Assessment)	(If declined, please state reason and log with EHA Central)
Check address / telephone numbers/email address of those with Parental Responsibilities and Day to Day care	

Mum: Full name:	«address_block»
Dad: Full name:	
Step Parent: Full name:	«address_block»
Other: Full name	
Email: Home. Work.	Telephone: Home. Work. Mobile.

I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

Staff Signature		Date:		Print Name	
Parent Signature		Date:		Print Name	
Parent Signature		Date:		Print Name	
Students Signature		Date:		Print Name	

Appendix C

Lateness letter

Dear xxxxxx

Re: Child Name : DOB:

As part of our commitment to supporting families with maintaining strong attendance we routinely monitor our school registers (every couple of weeks.) This monitoring is highlighting that your child is beginning to show a pattern of persistent lateness. This has resulted in xxxx occurrences of lateness since xxxx.

Because of the impact lateness can have on learning and children's attitudes to school and work we have an attendance system in place where we write to families to let them know, early on, of emerging issues such as this. We understand this can oftentimes seem onerous or imposing but we are committed to offering support and guidance on attendance wherever possible because of the big impact it can have on learning.

If you are experiencing any difficulties regarding getting to school on time we would welcome you to contact me or your class teacher so we can take the opportunity to meet and see what support we can put in place to improve the levels of lateness.

Please note that if your child arrives after registers close (9:30am) this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered. As such, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any concerns or worries regarding improving the levels of lateness so we can work together to avoid this and ensure your child gets the most out of school they can. Thank you for your support and understanding.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. D. Buddle
Head teacher